

It is celebrated on the full moon day (Sravana Poornima) of the lunar Month Sravana which also coincide with Upakarma and Hayagreeva Jayanthi.

This festival is also called as Rakhi Poornima, Nariyal Poornima, Kajari Poornima, and Sravana Poornima according to the celebrations held in different states.

On the occasion of this festival generally we observe sisters tie a sacred thread called Rakhi to the wrist of their brothers, in turn brothers give gifts to their sisters and exchange sweets to mark the occasion.

While etymology of the word Rakhi could not be traced, the word Raka in Sanskrit is referred to as a woman, full moon day, sentiment, affection etc.

Perhaps, women tying the sacred thread (Rakhi) on the full Moon-day on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan out of sentimental affection to their brothers connect to the meaning of the word Raka.

ORIGIN & HISTORY OF RAKSHA BANDHAN

While exact origin of the festival Rakhi could not be traced, there are certain historical references that connects to the festival of Raksha Bandhan. It also seems to have roots in the ancient rituals and tradition of India.

Indra-Sachi Devi-Brihaspathi

It is said as per Bhavishya Purana that, Indra the King of Devathas was advised by Deva Guru Bruhaspathi to

wear a Raksha Bandhan as a protection against enemies (Demons) when he was getting defeated at the hands of Vritra.

Accordingly, Sachi Devi (consort of Indra) and Brihaspathi tie Raksha Bandhan to Indra on this full moon day in the month of Sravana.

Lord Sri Krishna–Yudhistira

It is said that Lord Sri Krishna had advised Yudhistira (Dharma Raja) to get a Raksha Bandhan tied to his hand as a protection against the impending evils.

These references show that the festival of Rakhi and the tradition of Raksha Bandhan is an ancient tradition not of recent origin.

Concept & Significance of Raksha Bandhan



Raksha means protection or defense and Bandhan means a bond.

Raksha Bandhan means tying of sacred band as a symbol of protection or defense against all evils.

The concept of Raksha Bandhan is mainly that of a protection against the impending evils.

Though popularly depicted as a festival among brother and sister (biological siblings), if one looks back into the history it is not confined to only Raakhi festival or is it confined to only between a sister and brother.



It could be by a wife or a Mother, or a Guru or a saint/sage. We also find people adopting for this purpose brothers in the neighborhood when own brothers are not available.

Commonly we find people going to the priests in temples and getting sacred thread tied to their hands especially on the new moon day (Amavasya). Belief is that it will act as a protection against evils.

In Hindu religious functions we observe the Purohit tying sacred thread to the wrist of person/s performing the sacred ritual before its commencement.

Even the Yagnopaveetham acts as a Raksha (protection) to the wearer if one maintains its sanctity and spirituality and performs nithya karma like Sandhyavandana etc. without fail.

In the concept of Marriage, Suthra Dharana (Mangala Suthra) and Kankana Bandhana (tying of sacred thread to the wrist of bride and bridegroom by each other) also indicates the inner significance and meaning Raksha Bandhan.

In the context of Sri Anantha Padmanabha Vrata significant feature is worshiping Lord Anantha with a red-coloured silk thread having 14 knots known as Thora. On completion of pooja this Thora is tied to the shoulder or wrist of the Grihastha. It is believed to act as a protection (Raksha) to the one who wears it.

There are several such traditions which are similar that Indians follow in their day-to-day life and all these signify the concept of Raksha Bandhan (protection).

What is being celebrated now is an extension of the ancient tradition.

Significance of Raksha Bandhan from a sloka that is recited while tying the Rakhi.

येन बद्धो बली राजा दानवेन्द्रो महाबलः।

तेन त्वाम् अभिबध्नामि रक्षे मा चल मा चल॥

(I am tying a Rakhi on you, like the one on mighty demon king Bali. Be firm, O Rakhi, do not falter).

Raksha Bandhan is also known by various other names viz. Vish tarak (destroyer of evil), Punya Pradayak (bestower of merits), Papa Nashak (destroyer of sins).

MESSAGE OF RAAKHI FESTIVAL

Apparently, Raksha Bandhan symbolizes the unmatched bondage of love, care and respect between a brother and a sister which is renewed through the Rakhi festival.

Raksha Bandhan escalates the need for both men and women, young and old to cultivate pious feelings for each other and live in a harmonious co-existence as brothers and sisters in the society.

Thus, the festival of Rakhi conveys a message that has socio spiritual significance underscoring the need for nurturing of positive qualities, purity in thought, word and deed.

Sri Krushnaarpanamastu

Hari Sarvottama - Vaayu Jeevottama

Sri GuruRaajo Vijayate



